

February 23, 2022

Dear Honorable Members of the Joint Committee on Planning and Development:

My name is Marley Dixon and I am a 14-year-old 9<sup>th</sup> grader and a life-long animal lover. I live in Newtown with my family and four rescue pets. I am a local animal sanctuary youth board member and a national youth council representative for Farm Sanctuary. While I am grateful for the strong laws in Connecticut that protect us all, I urge you to support House Bill 5170.

According to the Humane Society of the United States, cases of animals left outside are investigated more by police and animal control agencies than any other type of animal abuse. Extreme weather conditions can cause suffering and death for dogs left outside without proper shelter. The State's current cruelty and tethering law offers some protection but the language doesn't provide enough guidance for action. House Bill 5170 provides exactly what to look for before it's too late.

I've seen dogs outside in freezing temperatures, in strong wind and rain, and I've stayed awake wondering if they are protected. I've seen chained up dogs in hot weather and wondered if anything would actually happen if I called for help. I've also wondered if some owners who truly love their pets are just unaware of the risk in leaving their dogs outside. Maybe a stronger law can help people understand the risk better.

There are many reasons to support House Bill 5170, including these:

- Tying up a dog creates a risk for attacks. A friendly dog, when kept tied up, can become anxious and aggressive. A restrained dog who is unable to run, may resort to "fight mode" when approached.
- It is not uncommon for tied up dogs to be hurt from their restraints.
- Restrained dogs may have irregular feedings and overturned water bowls.
- Without shelter, food, and water, a dog's chance of survival in cold temperature decreases. Dogs can get hypothermia even with a fur coat. They can easily overheat in the sun too.
- The weather has become more extreme in recent years.

It's time we really support justice for all. No dog should be shackled for hours and no dog should freeze to death in a yard. Thank you and I hope you support House Bill 5170.

Please contact me if you have questions or if you would like to talk about helping animals.

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Resources:

Humane Society of the United States ([www.humanesociety.org](http://www.humanesociety.org))  
Animal Legal Defense Fund ([www.aldf.org](http://www.aldf.org))